

Dinner Dresses, Daring and Demure?

By
Lady Duff Gordon

LADY DUFF-GORDON, the famous "Lucile" of London, and foremost creator of fashions in the world, writes each week the fashion article for this newspaper, presenting all that is newest and best in styles for well-dressed women.

Lady Duff-Gordon's Paris establishment brings her into close touch with that centre of fashion.

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ART and taste figure in dinner dresses.

A woman may be justly judged by her dinner gown. If it is appropriate to the dinner and suitable for her, she is a woman of taste, discretion and discrimination.

A dinner gown should be fresh. If the laces are crushed or the material looks ever so slightly soiled or crushed or faded, the wearer writes herself down a sloven in mind and dress. Immaculateness in attire is a compliment that is due to one's hostess. If we haven't a suitable gown for dinner we should acknowledge the invitation with regrets. Appearing at dinner in unsuitable attire is a direct affront to the host or hostess. Our absence might be deplored, but our presence in ill-chosen attire will be the more deplored.

A dinner gown may be daring or demure, according to the personality of the wearer. Certainly a debutante's should be demure. The woman of thirty or more, of established social position, may wear a gown of more challenging type. A beautiful leader of New York society introduced the mode of wearing dinner gowns cut to the waist line in the back. Her stately yet piquant brunette beauty was equal to the task of "carrying off," let us call it, a courageous mode. On a girl or a woman of less assertive type it would have been impossible.

The gown depends in some measure upon the dinner. For the quiet dinner of six or eight covers a magnificent gown would be ill chosen. Far better a tasteful trifle in chiffon, with a flower or two. For a large affair or a comparatively small dinner commemorating an important event, the most sumptuous gown in your wardrobe should be selected.

A gown appropriate for the most stately dining function is represented by the largest figure on this page. A handsome brocade is the fabric for its fashioning. Two of its distinguishing features are the straight, narrow skirt that impends as surely as does Autumn weather, and the panniers that are also certain factors in the Fall garments. I place this gown high in the rank of my creations. Because of its grace, combined with stateliness, it is a darling of my fancy. The panniers, long and crossed, add but slightly to the apparent bulk of the figure. The long, square train depending from the shoulders conforms to the passing taste. The bodice, of straight lines, is of embroidered chiffon. The

elaborate trimming, chiefly in horizontal lines, is of metallic embroidery. The shirred front is so ornamented. Over the shoulders, and following the lines of the crossed panniers, are rows of the metallic embroidery in floral

Taffeta for the Gown and Embroidered Chiffon for the Coat Combine in an Informal Dinner Costume



A Demure Dinner Dress of Chiffon, with Trimming of Satin Bands.

A Brocade Gown Appropriate for the Most Stately Dining Function. The Straight, Narrow Skirt and Panniers Denote the New Mode.

design. The neck is higher than last season. It is cut as though I had intended to give it the wide, straight line that is so becoming to one of a graceful neck, then had changed my mind and rounded it to a wide curve. The sleeves reach the elbows. A very wide girde of soft satin ribbon lends distinction to the gown without making the wearer's waist look larger. Let me call your attention to the chiffon that covers the hips, yet permits the effect of panniers, draped lower, of the brocade.

As simple as the foregoing is

ornate is the unostentatious frock of chiffon trimmed with curving folds of satin, with a plaited heading of the satin. The deep fold about the edge of the gown and nearly of knee height is succeeded by one a sixth of its width. The top and the third of the folds is double the width of the second. A proverb of dress is that irregularity lends piquancy.

This dinner gown has it. Note that the lower three-quarters of the sleeves is formed of satin, corresponding to that of the folds on the skirt, and that a narrow plaiting defines the point of the meeting of chiffon and satin. The neck, cut to a very low point, and the very long sleeves, are finished by a collar and lace ruffles of delicately embroidered net.

Taffeta draped with apparent negligence, but great care, light chiffon for a blouse and a dark embroidered chiffon coat, comprises the third of the dinner gowns.